

## House Resolution No. 415

**Whereas**, the Gerth family of Memphis, Missouri, has attained considerable distinction down through the years for its multi-generational contributions to the economy of the area as business leaders and employers; and

**Whereas**, in 1904 Fred Gerth, Sr., founded an undertaking and furniture store in Wyaconda to take advantage of the tendency of wood manufacturers of the day to construct caskets and furniture which were then shipped together on the same trains; and

**Whereas**, one of the seminal events in the history of Fred Gerth's enterprise occurred when he successfully located and delivered a casket and vault appropriate for the 8 foot, 4.5 inch tall Ella Ewing when she passed away in nearby Gorin on January 10, 1913; and

**Whereas**, Fred Gerth's business expanded to include funeral homes in Gorin and Rutledge, a facility in Bible Grove which had previously been owned by the Thrasher family, and his brother-in-law, George Baskett, as a partner; and

**Whereas**, the Gerth family provided free ambulance services in northeast Missouri, purchased the Mulch and Sons store in Memphis, and filled Fred Gerth and George Baskett's entrepreneurial shoes upon their retirement by having Albert C. Gerth and Frederick Gerth take over operations; and

**Whereas**, in 1959 Albert Gerth was succeeded by his son, George Frederick Gerth, who continued business expansion into Shelbina and Paris, purchased Individual Mausoleum Corporation in Jamesport, and then sold his share of the business to Frederick Gerth; and

**Whereas**, Frederick Gerth oversaw a reduction in the number of retail locations operated by the family until his retirement in 1993, when Fritz and Janet Gerth took over ownership of the endeavor which will eventually be run by Melissa (Gerth) Behrens and her husband, Jeff, as the fourth generation of the family to head long-lasting, ever-changing Gerth & Baskett Furniture and Gerth Funeral Service:

**Now, therefore, be it resolved** that we, the members of the Missouri House of Representatives, Ninety-second General Assembly, join unanimously to applaud the stellar history of Gerth & Baskett Furniture and Gerth Funeral Service and to convey to all of those involved this legislative body's heartiest congratulations upon attaining the Centennial Anniversary of the founding of their businesses and our best wishes for continued personal and professional success for many more years to come; and

**Be it further resolved** that the Chief Clerk of the Missouri House of Representatives be instructed to prepare a properly inscribed copy of this resolution for presentation to the Gerth family of Memphis, Missouri.

Offered by \_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Brian Munzlinger  
District No. 1

I, Catherine L. Hanaway, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Ninety-second General Assembly, Second Regular Session, do certify that the above is a true and correct copy of House Resolution No. 415, adopted

February 5, 2004.

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Catherine L. Hanaway, Speaker